



**Season's Greetings  
from Jane Garvey**

## Garvey Announces Pay Hike, Core Comp Increase

As this year winds down, it's always helpful to look back and take stock of what we have accomplished over the past year and where we need to devote more attention.

While any of us can find specific areas where we could have done this or that better, on the whole I think the agency is better off than it was a year ago. And, I want to take the opportunity, as we close out the year, to thank you for your dedication and commitment. You are the ones who have made this possible.

By any standard of measurement, the year 2000 was extraordinarily challenging,



**starting with the Y2K rollover and moving through a difficult spring and summer when aircraft delays were a daily feature in the news and runway safety challenges were increasingly attracting public attention.**

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Administrator Jane Garvey has approved total average pay raises ranging from 3.7 percent to 5.3 percent for FAA employees in 2001. These figures include locality pay increases that average about 1 percent.

At press time, draft versions of the general increase for each locality were available on the Office of Personnel Management Web site at [www.opm.gov](http://www.opm.gov). Click on "Draft 2001 Salary Tables."

Employees covered by the FG pay plan will receive the average 3.7 percent raise recently announced by President Clinton.

Eligible PASS employees in Airway

Facilities and individuals currently covered under Core Compensation will receive an average 5.3 percent increase in their base salary.

That includes 1.6 percent that was added to their base salaries because the agency met its Organizational Success Increase goals for 2000. The OSI increase was larger than normal because another integral part of Core Compensation — the Superior Contribution Increase — was not implemented this year. The money set aside for the SCI was added to the OSI increase for distribution to eligible employees.

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#### In This Issue:

Read about the next generation of FAA e-mail, winners of the Secretary's awards, the latest findings of the Accountability Board, and new Web sites for employees and consumers.



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## News in Brief

The reconstructed wreckage of TWA Flight 800 will be permanently stored at the new NTSB Academy site.



### NTSB Picks Academy Site

The National Transportation Safety Board selected George Washington University as the site of its training academy for transportation accident investigators.

The facility will be located on the school's Loudoun County, Va., campus adjacent to the Department of Transportation's National Crash Analysis Center. It is expected to open in early 2003.

The NTSB agreed to a 20-year lease for classroom and future laboratory space, and open space to house accident reconstruction and other equipment to be used in training accident investigators. The reconstructed wreckage of TWA Flight 800 will be housed at the facility for training purposes.

### Denver AFSS Wins Regional Award

The Northwest Mountain Region selected the Denver Automated Flight Service Station as its AFSS Facility of the Year for 1999.

Its achievements in 1999 included nine flight assists, including one that was rated "outstanding." A flight assist occurs when in-flight assistance is provided to an aircraft in a potentially dangerous situation. The Denver AFSS provided approximately

698,000 services, making it the 11th busiest among the FAA's 61 automated flight service stations.

"Our operating theme is 'Providing America's Best Flight Services,'" said Don Kirby, the facility manager. "This award recognizes the professionalism and high level of services our employees provided users last year."

### More Safety Information Added to FAA Site

The FAA is adding safety information about international airlines to its Web site. Previously, the site contained only domestic airline safety information.

The database is available at <http://nasdac.faa.gov/main.htm>. The international aviation database contains records of 260 accidents, searchable by airline name. Each record contains a brief description of the accident as well as the date, location, aircraft type, registration number, number of passengers, fatalities and injuries.

The site also contains domestic aviation safety data, including federal aviation regulations, an aviation glossary and links to other aviation sites.

### Former FAAers to Join Medical Board

Three former FAA employees are joining a new board of aviation medical advisors being formed by the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association.

Included in the eight-member board are Dr. Audie Davis, former manager of the FAA Aeromedical Certification Division; Dr. Stanley Mohler, former chief of the Civil Aeromedical Institute and Aeromedical Applications Division; and Kathleen Yodice, former litigation/policy counsel for the FAA.

Dr. Jon Jordan, the FAA's Federal Air Surgeon, said he wants to consult frequently with the board, which will address medical issues of concern to general aviation pilots.

### Call for Nominations

The National Aeronautic Association is requesting nominations for the Frank G. Brewer Trophy.

The trophy is awarded annually to an individual, group or organization for significant contributions of enduring value to aerospace education in the United States. Nominations and endorsement letters must be received by Dec. 31. They should be sent to NAA, 1815 N. Fort Myer Dr., Suite 500, Arlington, VA 22209-1805.

For more information, access the NAA's Web site at [www.naa-usa.org](http://www.naa-usa.org), click on "Awards" and "Brewer Trophy." Or, call Anne Ruebelmann at (703) 527-0226.

### Correction

The year of the car on p. 12 of the November 2000 issue of the *FAA Intercom* was incorrectly identified. It is a 1956 Chevy Bel Air.



## Transition to New E-mail System Planned

The FAA plans to release a Request for Proposal later this month for the transition to and integration of a new e-mail system for the agency.

Known as NexGen, the project should substantially upgrade the agency's messaging capability. The Information Technology Division in the Office of Acquisitions is in charge of the project.

The decision to implement NexGen resulted from Lotus' decision to phase out support for cc:Mail, the system currently used by the FAA.

Under the Operational Capability Development phase of the project, three systems have been identified as filling the agency's messaging needs: Lotus Domino, Microsoft Exchange and an unnamed system by Netscape. Companies bidding on the RFP will present a proposal using one of these messaging systems.

The contract for transition and integration is expected to be awarded in late March of 2001. The first stage of installation is planned for June through October of 2001

at Headquarters, the regions and centers. The second stage is planned for October 2001 through April 2002 for the rest of the agency.

Two additional phases of NexGen are awaiting approval from the Joint Resources Council. The second phase would provide enhancements, such as workflow/collaboration applications. The third phase would provide new or emerging technologies, such as desktop video and "whiteboarding," in which discussions among several users can be viewed in near real-time in a chat room.

The project is being coordinated by chief information officers in every line of business. Union input will be solicited via the National Partnership Council and will continue through this forum and the chief information officer for each line of business throughout the program.

## Reality, Public's Perceptions on Safety Diverge

Administrator Jane Garvey believes there is a "disconnect" between the FAA's excellent safety record and the way that record is perceived by the public, and it needs to be fixed.

During a speech to the International Air Safety Seminar in New Orleans, La., the administrator reaffirmed the FAA's commitment to further lowering an already low accident rate and spoke about why the perception of aviation safety does not match the reality. She offered suggestions on how to improve the perception through actions and words.

"I think we can do a lot to improve perception by improving the way we talk about aviation and about safety," she said. "Aviation is complex. It is technical, and the industry speaks an inside language. We must find ways to translate — to simplify and clarify — for the public. And we need to talk in a way that addresses people's concerns."

Passengers need to be assuaged that even though they are not in control when they fly, they are in the hands of highly

trained pilots flying for airlines that put a premium on safety.

Garvey said aviation professionals must use terms people can understand. Take for instance the risk of being involved in a major accident. Garvey quoted Dr. Arnold Barnett from MIT, who said "a child who boards a U.S. domestic jet today is more likely to grow up to be president than to fail to reach his destination."

Improving perception is important, Garvey said, because false reports and cries to "do something" regardless of the significance of the problem waste resources. "They detract from what we know serves safety best — a disciplined and targeted approach to risk management."

The entire text of the administrator's speech can be found at [www.faa.gov/newsroom.htm](http://www.faa.gov/newsroom.htm).





## People



Michael A. Canavan

### **Flynn Replacement Announced**

U.S. Army Lt. Gen. Michael A. Canavan is the new associate administrator for Civil Aviation Security. He replaces Cathal Flynn who retired in October.

Prior to retiring from the military, Canavan served as chief of staff for the U.S. European Command, where he was responsible for the day-to-day operation of 1,400 joint staff overseeing 100,000 troops in Europe, the Middle East and Africa.

He also served as commanding general for the Joint Special Operations Command from 1996 to 1998.



Lynne Osmus

### **Osmus Named to API Post**

Lynne Osmus has returned from Europe to become acting deputy assistant administrator for Policy, Planning and International Aviation. She replaces Louise Mailett, who currently is acting assistant administrator.

Osmus was director of the Europe, Africa and Middle East Office. Paul Feldman will act in Osmus' place.



Harry LeBlanc

### **In Memoriam**

Harry LeBlanc, Complaints Division manager in the Office of Civil Rights, died Nov. 28 while undergoing chemotherapy for cancer.

He worked at the Coast Guard and in the FAA's Office of Acquisitions before joining the Civil Rights Office. He was one of the founding members of GLOBE (Gay, Lesbian, or Bisexual Employees) for both the Department of Transportation and the FAA. In 1994, he conceived and established DOT GLOBE's Gay Pride Month honoring diversity in the gay/lesbian community.

He was instrumental in developing the agency's national Equal Employment Opportunities policies and procedures and in the development and success of the EEO Mediation program.



Ray Long

### **Long Announces Retirement**

Ray Long, director of the Office of Information Systems Security, will retire at the end of this year.

After working in FAA field offices during the early part of his career, Long came to Headquarters in 1998 to lead the agency in its Year 2000 efforts. He then led the Airway Facilities Operational Support Program, before helping to establish the Office of Information Systems Security.

Long is retiring with his family to Western Utah.

### **FAAer Named Award Recipient**

Leo Weston, National Resource Specialist for airworthiness, received the Maintenance & Repair Organization (MRO) Award from the Aviation Week Group at the MRO Europe conference in Paris. Weston was honored for his work in strengthening ties between the FAA and Europe's Joint Aviation Authorities, and addressing aging aircraft problems, extended twin-engine operations, human factors and a variety of other airworthiness safety programs.

### **ATA Honors Van Opstal**

The Air Transport Association's Operations Council presented its President's Award to Eric Van Opstal, national resource specialist for international flight operations. He developed and modernized policies and procedures related to extended twin-engine operations, and worked on the related Aviation Rulemaking Advisory Committee. He also developed a handbook bulletin for aircraft rescue and fire fighting.





# FAA Wins its First AvWeek Technology Award

## More NHCFAE Winners

October's edition of *FAA Intercom* did not list all the Presidential Award winners announced by the National Hispanic Coalition of Federal Aviation Employees.

The other winners were: Charlie Kegan, Headquarters; Douglas Murphy, Southwest Region; Fanny Rivera, Headquarters; Stanley Masset, Southwest Region; Rey Blancarte, Southwest Region; Idalia Rios, Southwest Region; Teresa Ramos, Eastern Region; Barbara Silva, Mike Monroney Aeronautical Center; and Ruth Turull, Southwest Region.

## Recognizing Minority Business Development

Three FAA employees received awards at the 2000 DOT Minority Enterprise Development Week Award Ceremony.

*John Lippe*, senior contracting specialist at the Mike Monroney Aeronautical Center, received the Outstanding Procurement Official of the Year Award for his work on a contract awarded to the Ross Group Construction Corp. The total procurement time from receipt of the purchase request to contract award was just 28 days.

*Gerald Lewis*, FAA Small Business Program manager at the Mike Monroney Aeronautical Center, received the Outstanding Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization Specialist of the Year Award. With Lewis' support, the center has consistently met or exceeded major procurement program goals established by the FAA administrator.

*Jennifer Gooden*, a management/program analyst at Headquarters, received a Procurement Official award for managing the Source-Net small business database, which helps FAA offices obtain information about small businesses, small disadvantaged businesses, small businesses owned and controlled by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals and women-owned businesses.

*Aviation Week & Space Technology* magazine presented a prestigious award to the FAA for technology the agency helped develop that better enables airport screeners do their jobs. This is the first time the FAA has been so honored.

The Threat Image Projection (TIP) system's ability to project computer-generated images of weapons onto the screens of security checkpoint X-ray machines drew *AvWeek's* attention. This capability keeps screeners alert and tests their skill at detecting knives, guns and bombs.

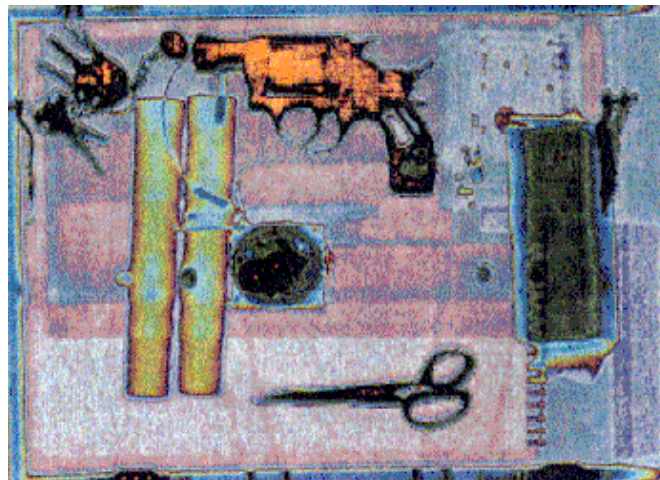
The agency's Aviation Security Human Factors Program at the William J. Hughes Technical Center developed TIP jointly with Rapiscan Security Products and PerkinElmer Instruments.

"We've deployed hundreds of advanced technology devices to detect explosives in passengers' bags, but this is

the first system we've designed to improve performance of the human operators — our first line of defense in aviation security," said Administrator Jane Garvey.

While TIP technology is sophisticated, its operation is simple. The system injects threat images at random into real bags going through the X-ray machines and into images of bags created by TIP. When a screener detects a threat and hits the button to stop the suspect bag, TIP flashes an acknowledgement and records the screener's performance. TIP also records missed threat images.

The new system not only will help train screeners and keep them more alert, it also will allow companies to monitor each screener's performance. Companies can then retrain the screeners or shift them to other positions, such as operating hand wands or trace detectors.



The weapons viewed on this checkpoint security screen are not real. They are projected there to test screener alertness.



## Secretary/Hammer Award W

### Valor



(From left) Barbara Silva accepting on behalf of Sharon Kelley, Mike Monroney Aeronautical Center; Mark Thompson, Southern Region; and Georgia Hines, Mike Monroney Aeronautical Center.

### Excellence



(From left) Robbin L. Adams, Southern Region; Bernadette L. Keitt, Southern Region; Allyson M. Fernandes, New England Region; and Maria Elena Martinez, Southwest Region.

### EEO/Affirmative Action



Robert Barton (left), Headquarters, and Jessie McMullen, Mike Monroney Aeronautical Center.

Fifteen individuals and three teams received the Secretary of Transportation's awards for leadership, technological contributions, support, and promoting equal opportunity and diversity at the FAA. Awards also were given to FAA employees for valor and volunteer service.

For the first time, the Vice President's Hammer Awards were announced at the ceremony. They were given to five teams for improving service to FAA customers and making government function more like a business. The January 2001 edition of *FAA Intercom* will carry the winners of this year's Hammer Awards, along with their photos.

The winners were honored earlier in the day during a ceremony at FAA Headquarters.

Acting Deputy Administrator Monte Belger, standing in for Administrator Jane Garvey, presided over the event. Also honored were the nominees for each awards category, as well as recipients of the Secretary's "Find the Good and Praise It" awards and Intermodal Awards.

The exploits of each individual and team are too numerous to detail here. But the awards and locations of the winners indicate that employees from across the country are contributing in many ways to the FAA mission.



## Winners Gather in Washington

### Meritorious Achievement



(From left) Joseph C. Foster, Southern Region; Maureen Knopes, Headquarters; Walter J. Macomber, New England Region; and Carlton R. Wine, Headquarters (kneeling). Not pictured is Elizabeth Erickson, Headquarters.

### Volunteer Service



Donavon Decker, Great Lakes Region

### Team



Strategic Planning Implementation Team, Headquarters



FAA/NATCA Article 17 Team, Headquarters



Boston ASR-9 Restoration Team, New England Region





# Board Reports on Sexual Harassment/Misconduct Complaints

The Accountability Board reports the number of reported complaints about sexual harassment and related misconduct remained about the same in its second year of operation, compared to the first year.

Accountability Board Director Barbara Smith recently briefed the FAA's Management Board about results for the year ending June 30, 2000. She also discussed results from the July-September timeframe, during which the board expanded its scope to include harassment based on race, color, gender, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, age, and disability.

The number of cases reported during the second year remained consistent with results from the first year. Some 201 allegations/incidents of sexual harassment or related misconduct were reported to and tracked by the board during the first year, compared to 199 cases during the second.

Types of behavior reported remained relatively consistent throughout the second year with jokes, comments, and language of a sexual nature accounting for 29 percent of the total number of allegations reported.

Misuse of government computers to access sexually related material from the Internet or use of the cc:Mail system to send jokes/material of a sexual nature was the second most frequent type of behavior. As a percentage of the total number of cases reported, this type of behavior increased slightly from the first year. "Given the level of attention already devoted to this issue, any increase from the first year is troublesome," said Smith.

Of the cases closed by the Board during the second year, 24 resulted in no action being taken; 77 resulted in verbal or written admonishments or counseling; 24 in letters of reprimand; 37 in proposed suspensions ranging from one to 30 days; six in proposed reductions in grade; and six in notices of proposed removal from federal service. Several cases resulted in either



resignations or retirements in lieu of adverse actions.

Smith reports that the majority of cases were reported within the required 2-day time period and 68 percent of those cases not requiring a formal security investigation were completed within the prescribed 10-day time period.

## Early Results from Expanded Scope

Smith also briefed the Management Board about cases tracked during the first 90 days of the board's expanded scope.

From July 1 to Sept. 30, 64 allegations/incidents were reported to and tracked by the board. Forty of the 64 cases involved allegations of a sexual nature; 10 were of a racial nature; four were related to gender; three related to national origin; three alleged harassment due to sexual orientation; two alleged derogatory comments based on a disability; and two alleged reprisal.

While emphasizing that much has been accomplished, Smith acknowledged much remains to be done, especially in the

areas of training and education. "Training efforts must go beyond the mere mechanics of the board process," she said. "We must keep in mind that the ultimate goal of the board is to eliminate from the work environment behaviors that interfere with employees performing to their optimal potential. Training efforts must primarily focus on ways to change employee behavior that adversely affects the workplace."

Smith also noted that effective feedback to complaining parties and individuals against whom allegations are made remains an area in which improvement is needed. She also emphasized the board's oversight role. Contrary to what many believe, she noted, decisions as to the dispositions of cases are made within the affected organization and are reported to the board after the decision is made.

A copy of the second year report, as well as the first quarter under the expanded scope, is available on the Human Resources Intranet site. Employees are encouraged to access the report, which is available at <http://Interweb.FAA.gov/ahr/account/account.cfm>.





## TCA Announces 2000 Merit Awards

Fifteen FAA employees and teams received awards at this year's annual meeting of the Air Traffic Control Association. The awards give special recognition to people engaged in the development, operation and maintenance of global air traffic control systems, outstanding achievement within the system environment or for an outstanding contribution.

The Gen. E. R. Quesada Memorial Award went to John A. Naylor from the Chattanooga Tower for outstanding achievement and contribution as an air traffic control manager.

Air Traffic Control Specialist of the Year awards were given to Daniel D. Bates and Paul E. Wallace from the Albuquerque Tower; Kurt G. Aberhorn from the Miami Center; and Lou Ann Toeppen from the Albuquerque Flight Service Station. They were recognized for performing in an exemplary or extraordinary manner in support of air traffic control.

Joann Kansier from Headquarters received the Life Cycle Management Award, while Robert D. Auer from the Salt Lake City System Management Office was chosen Airway Transportation Systems Specialist of the Year. The Life Cycle Management Award goes to the person whose outstanding achievement or contribution has added to the quality, safety or efficiency of air traffic control. The Airway Transportation Systems Specialist Award replaces the Airway Facilities Technician of the Year award.

ATCA Chairman Awards were presented to: Joseph C. Foster, Tampa Tower and West Florida Hub; Joseph C. Wunderler, William J. Hughes Technical Center; Sue Spurgeon, William J. Hughes Technical Center; the FAA contingent of the Buckeye Military Operations Area Team; GPS Spectrum Protection Team, Headquarters; ICAO Reduced Vertical Separation Minimum Task Force, Headquarters; William M. Dunn, Denver Automated Flight Service Station; and Joseph A. Jeanes, Daytona Beach Tower.

## National ATC Awards Given to Towers, TRACONs, AFSS

Air Traffic presented more national facility awards this past month.

Dayton's Automated Flight Service Station was recognized as AFSS Facility of the Year. It provided uninterrupted service to customers with no offloaded calls to other facilities during installation of new weather graphics system and related training; formed a facility projects committee; and continued operation of a public relations committee.

Maureen Woods, deputy director of Air Traffic, presented the Portland, Ore., tower with a Facility of the Year Award for Level 8 towers.

Tower staff kept traffic flowing despite a 3 percent increase in operations and extensive construction projects at Portland International. Complicating their job was the opening of a new air traffic control tower. Woods also cited the tower's "team spirit" and superior training program that boasted a 100 percent training success rate.

Air Traffic Director Ron Morgan presented a Facility of the Year Award to Fort Worth Meacham Tower for Level 9 towers. Meacham has not recorded an operational error since 1995 and only one error in the past 30 years. There has never

been a controller deviation. Bell Helicopter was so impressed by the tower's operational support, it moved its training operations to the airport.

Minneapolis Tower and Terminal Radar Approach Control was recognized as Level 11 Facility of the Year. FAA employees there are working with Northwest Airlines and NATCA in completing a precision runway monitor program, the first of its kind in the world.

The Ann Arbor Air Traffic Control Tower was recognized as Level 5 Facility of the Year. The facility has been error free for the last seven years and has not had a grievance filed against it in six years. The diverse facility supports open communication, aviation outreach efforts and employee organizations.

Chicago O'Hare Air Traffic Control Tower received the Level 12 Facility of the Year award. Operations in 1999 totaled more than 897,000, with peak traffic exceeding 180 operations per hour. It recorded no operational errors from March 1999 to April 2000.

*FAA Intercom* will continue to report on the national ATC awards as they are presented.



(From left) Chris Blum, Great Lakes Region's Air Traffic manager; John Gehle, assistant facility representative for NAATS; and Kay Hoelting, Dayton AFSS Air Traffic manager, receive a facility of the year award from Ron Morgan, Air Traffic director.



## Garvey Approves Pay Increases

*continued from page 1*

The locality pay increases become effective with the pay period beginning Jan. 14, 2001, while the other increases become effective with the pay period beginning Dec. 31, 2000.

"Not only did we meet our FY 2000 goals in all categories, but we positioned ourselves to build on those goals in the coming year," Garvey said in a letter to employees announcing the pay increases.

The administrator also said that OSI goals for FY 2001 are posted on the Core Compensation Web site at [www.faa.gov/corecomp/](http://www.faa.gov/corecomp/). The FY 2000 goals are listed on the site, as well.

OSI categories from 2000 — safety, security, system efficiency, customer satisfaction, financial management, and model work environment — will remain the same for 2001, but more realistic metrics are being devised to measure their progress.

For instance, because of the wide variance in the number of accidents from year to year, an annual snapshot of the accident rate does not provide a proper perspective. The FAA will now begin using a 3-year average.

In the area of security, the FAA will focus on the detection rate for passenger screening and explosives detection systems, not just on the number of security incidents.

System efficiency will be measured in new ways, as well. Garvey said reducing the number of FAA-imposed ground stops affects only one aspect of system efficiency. So the FAA will measure other factors such as flexibility, reliability and access. The agency plans to improve the airport utilization rate at 21 major U.S. airports.

In other Core Compensation news, the agency will announce plans in the next few weeks for the FY 2001 SCI trial run and implementation process.

Also, pay bands under Core Compensation have been revised upward by an average of 3.4 percent as a result of job market surveys. For most Core Comp employees, this increases their pay range, not their actual pay. For employees whose pay falls below the minimum of the new band, their pay will be adjusted up to the new band minimum. The new pay bands are posted on the Core Comp Web site.

## Southern Region Makes Space for Additional Flights

The FAA's Southern Region has pried open some precious extra space in the congested Daytona Beach-Miami-Puerto Rico air corridors.

The number of flights in that area has been increasing steadily every year — exceeding 1,500 flights just over weekends even as destructive weather and corrosion have reduced the number of ground-based navigational aids in the region.

Compounding the problem has been the location of ground-based aids in other countries, which makes them harder to reach for maintenance. And although a rare occurrence, radar failures can wreak havoc because the lack of backup systems leaves large areas of unmonitored airspace.

The FAA knew years ago that trouble was brewing in this area, and considered ideas on how to deal with it.

The solution was development of an area navigation route system not dependent on ground-based navigational aids. Using GPS satellite signals and other advanced navigation systems, the Southern Region created six new air routes that properly equipped airlines may fly. American and Delta have jumped at the chance to install this equipment in order to use the new route structure.

The results have been impressive. American and Delta estimate their annual savings at \$740,000. Factoring in all operators, that amount probably exceeds \$1 million. Perhaps most importantly, airlines flying these new routes may proceed even if there is a temporary radar outage.

Many groups worked on this project, including Air Traffic, Flight Standards, Regulation and Certification, Aviation Systems Standards, NATCA, the airlines and aviation associations.

## Season's Greetings from the Administrator

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Recently, as I conducted the annual assessment of the agency's performance for the past year, I was pleased with the progress we made in all six strategic categories that serve as the heart and core of the FAA's business. What pleased me most was the fact our focus throughout the year was on systemic causes and long-term solutions to problems, not just annual achievements. This was true across the board — whether in safety, security, system efficiency, customer satisfaction, financial responsibility, or model work environment.

Now, with the coming of the new year, we have an opportunity to move that strategic

agenda even further. And, I look forward to working with you on that agenda, as well as the new, unexpected challenges that the new year most assuredly will bring

Meantime, please try to spend quality time during this holiday season with the most important people in your lives — your families and loved ones. I offer sincere best wishes of the season and the New Year to you and yours.



# FAA Offers Employees Holiday Travel Tips

With air travel becoming more congested and the holiday season upon us, travelers must be on top of their game if they are to reach their destination safely and with minimal delays.

Following are some tips the FAA provides its employees and the general public to make traveling as non-eventful as possible during the holiday season.

- ◆ Before leaving home, contact the airline to make sure your flight is on time. For real-time information on the operating status of the nation's largest airports, check the FAA's Air Traffic Control System Command Center Web site at [www.fly.faa.gov](http://www.fly.faa.gov).

- ◆ Arrive at the airport at least one hour early for domestic flights and two hours early for international flights. Holiday crowds coupled with current security may increase the time you need to check in. Build even more time into your schedule if you need help with children, elderly or disabled passengers, or passengers with medical conditions.

- ◆ Parking lots may be full, so consider using public transportation or having a friend drop you off. If you are driving, add extra time to your schedule.

- ◆ Don't leave your car unattended in front of the terminal and be sure to observe all parking restrictions. Because of current security, local parking rules are strictly enforced.

- ◆ Keep your photo identification handy. Some airlines require you to have proper identification to fly. If you do not have a photo identification card, make sure you have two pieces of identification, one of which should be issued by a government authority. Minors are not required to have identification.

- ◆ Keep your eyes open for unattended packages and bags, and report them to authorities. Watch your bags and don't accept packages from strangers.

- ◆ Be prepared to answer questions about who packed your bags and whether you might have left them unattended at any time. Think carefully and answer honestly. History has shown that criminals and terrorists use unwitting passengers to carry bombs or other dangerous items on board aircraft, either by tricking passengers into carrying packages or slipping items into unwatched bags. Admitting you have concerns about your bags will only lead to a little extra security applied to the bags.

- ◆ Do not joke about having a bomb or firearm in your possession. Security personnel are trained to react when they hear these words. Penalties can be severe and could include time in prison and fines.

- ◆ Don't pack unprocessed film in bags you plan to check. New explosives detection systems used to screen checked baggage might damage your film. Instead, pack your film in a carry-on bag and bring it with you on board the plane. X-ray equipment used at the security checkpoints to screen carry-on bags will not damage film below 1000ASA.

- ◆ Both carry-on and checked bags are subject to hand searches, so it's a good idea to leave gifts unwrapped until after you arrive at your destination. If airline security personnel cannot determine by X-ray the contents of a package, they can open it for inspection.

- ◆ Leave your firearms at home, and do not pack fireworks, flammable materials, household cleaners, or pressurized containers. Remember that violators of hazardous materials regulations are subject to civil penalties of up to \$27,500 per violation and criminal prosecution that could carry penalties of \$250,000 or more and up to five years in prison.

Special travel advisories are available by calling the Department of Transportation's travel advisory line at (800) 221-0673.



Passengers shouldn't expect security checkpoint lines to be this short during the holiday season. The FAA suggests travelers arrive at the airport well in advance of their flight in case of long lines.



## FAA Unveils Public Inquiry, Consumer Web Sites

The FAA has unveiled two new Web sites for travelers and other users of the nation's skyways.

The first site provides air travel safety tips and real-time information on delays at specific airports. The second is an easy-to-use site to obtain answers to hundreds of commonly asked questions about the FAA and aviation.

Administrator Jane Garvey said the purpose of the new sites is to reduce the stress and frustration that travelers sometimes feel when traveling.

The first site, which can be found at [www.faa.gov](http://www.faa.gov) under "Traveler Information," outlines what passengers can do to enhance their safety while traveling by air. Called Fly Smart, the site is designed to follow a passenger's progress from packing for a trip, traveling to the airport and settling into the aircraft.

Travelers learn about a host of topics, including what to wear on planes, dealing with unruly passengers, turbulence, reacting to fire or smoke in the cabin, and aircraft evacuation. It also offers links to sites on consumer rights, travel advisories and traveling with disabilities.

The second site, which can be found on [www.faa.gov](http://www.faa.gov) under "Public Inquiry," answers the questions of travelers, pilots and the general public. This site provides one-stop shopping for everything from obtaining information on publications to reporting low-flying aircraft. The public can use the site to find FAA regulations, aeronautical charts and job opportunities.

They also can find information on aviation education, aviation statistics and how to contact the FAA regarding safety or security concerns.

Individuals also may e-mail questions to the FAA.

## Web Site Provides Advice for Changing Lives

The FAA has developed a Web site containing information for FAA employees experiencing life-altering events, such as marriage, birth, death of a family member, retirement or moving.

The Office of Human Resource Management developed the Life Links Web site at <http://lifelinks.faa.gov>. It is a convenient, one-stop guide for information, resources, tools and options related to benefits and major life-changing events.

Have you ever wondered, for instance, what effect becoming a parent has on your government benefits? There are many things to consider: changes in health and life insurance coverage and beneficiaries; obtaining a Social Security card for the child; changes to tax withholdings; leave options as a new parent.

Life Links can help employees sort through the issues. Benefits guidance and forms are organized around major events. For instance, by clicking on the "Moving" category, employees find out when and how to file change of address information, obtain a copy of their earnings and leave statement, change W-4 tax withholding amounts or learn if the Thrift Savings Program lends money for moves.



Forms can be printed directly from the site. There is plenty of information that employees can use to make decisions, such as different health benefits plans available when events prompt the need to consider a change in coverage.

Employees who are covered by a collective bargaining agreement should be aware that any provisions concerning benefits that appear in the negotiated agreement take precedence over information contained on the Life Links site.

For more information, employees should contact their Human Resource Management benefits officer.

## FAA Intercom

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